



State of Louisiana
Governor's Office of Homeland Security
and
Emergency Preparedness

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**State Agencies Continue to Provide Air Support, Air and
Water Quality Monitoring and Testing to Assumption
Parish Efforts to Respond to Bayou Corne Slurry Site**

BATON ROUGE, La. – State agencies continue to support efforts to identify the cause of bubbling, tremors and a mud slurry site in the Bayou Corne and Grand Bayou area in Assumption parish, including providing air support for more than a dozen flights over the slurry site and testing and monitoring to uncover the cause of the incident.

Officials from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana State Police, the Louisiana Department of Health Hospitals and the Louisiana National Guard will update community members about these efforts at a meeting in Pierre Part tonight.

For several weeks, state, local and federal officials have been investigating reports of unexplained bubbling and tremors in the area. Last Thursday, an area of wooded swamp located

in this area began to subside, engulfing large trees and creating a several hundred foot diameter area of a slurry mixture of muddy water and soil where trees and vegetation were the day before.

Assumption parish declared a state of emergency in order to monitor and respond to the threat posed by this incident to its citizens. Last Friday, Governor Bobby Jindal declared an emergency for the incident, which allows GOHSEP to pull resources from state agencies as needed to assist Assumption parish officials in responding to the incident. GOHSEP continues to coordinate communication and requests for support among local, state and federal agencies.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Department of Natural Resources' Office of Conservation has issued three Emergency Orders, with the primary order for Texas Brine LLC, to immediately abate any deterioration of its cavern.

DNR field inspectors continue to monitor and have a presence at the Assumption parish command post and incident locations.

DNR Geological team held a meeting of all involved scientists on Monday for examination and review of the data available and to theorize on the cause of the events.

DNR has contracted with Isotech Laboratories Inc. to perform complex isotopic analyses of natural gas samples in an effort to find the bubbling source.

The Injection and Mining staff members continue to monitor all operations that deal with cavern operations.

Additionally, DNR has an informational web page for the public to follow ongoing activities at <http://dnr.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=939&pnid=0&nid=172>

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is supporting Assumption Parish and DNR with air, water and sediment sampling and monitoring. Water samples from the slurry hole have tested positive for diesel range petroleum hydrocarbons (i.e. diesel). Analyses will continue to support source identification and hazard assessments.

DEQ began supporting Assumption Parish by conducting air monitoring on July 13. Before that, DEQ supported DNR by using the infrared Hawk camera to test abandoned wells for leaks. So far, 96 private properties have been assessed and none showed any health threats related to air pollution.

More samples of the slurry hole will be taken to help identify a possible source. Complex isotopic analyses will begin soon in an effort to identify whether any of the area industrial activities are the source of the many bubbling release points. However, with area pipelines de-

pressurized and bubbling in the bayou continuing, evidence appears to no longer implicate the pipelines as a source of the bubbling.

Natural gas is not toxic. It is not a priority pollutant according to the Clean Air Act. It is naturally occurring. The risks associated with natural gas deal with flammability and with oxygen depletion in closed spaces.

Air monitoring at the bubbling sites in the bayou, in private property assessments and at the slurry hole have not indicated any health threats from air pollution.

LOUISIANA STATE POLICE

LSP's Air Support Unit continues to provide regularly scheduled assessment flights over the area for parish and state officials. So far, State Police has provided 18 flights over the area, with more planned as requested by the parish. LSP HazMat Technicians continue to monitor the incident and provide support as needed.

Troop C Troopers assigned to Assumption Parish remain at the command site in order to assist local officials. Troopers stationed at the command site allow for quick closure of roadways, if the situation dictates. Troopers are also assisting with patrols throughout the evacuated area.

Troop C has assigned a supervisor to the command site as a liaison to ensure effective communication. Troop C's public information officer remains on standby to assist with getting road closure, evacuation plans, or any other pertinent information out to the media and public as needed.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Region 3 Department of Health and Hospitals' Public Health Emergency Response Coordinator (PHERC) has been monitoring the situation and activities with local partners since the start of the event.

DHH reps are actively engaged in a technical data review workgroup with subject matter experts from other state agencies, federal government and industry, so as to organize the data and/or results known to date.

LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD

The Louisiana National Guard continues to provide nighttime air support so that parish officials can monitor the slurry site after dark.

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